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V CORPS' 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION HELPS TO PEACEFULLY RESTORE SAMARRA CITY COUNCIL

1st Infantry Division release

TIKRIT, Iraq — Coalition forces, including Soldiers and key leaders from V Corps'

1st Infantry Division, joined Iraqi security forces to enter the city of Samarra

September 9 to peacefully reseal its city council leadership and conduct an assessment of its police stations.

In a city council meeting leadership elected a new city council, an interim mayor, and an acting police chief for Samarra until elections are set.

"This is a significant step forward, where the good people of Samarra are taking control of their destiny," said Maj. Gen. John R. S. Batiste, 1st Infantry Division commander.

Leaders from Salah Ad Din Province, the city of Samarra and division have taken steps to restore normalcy to the city and initiate millions of dollars of infrastructure and quality of life initiatives that have been on hold.

Immediately following the elections of the interim mayor and acting police chief;

Col. Randall Dragon, commander of the division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team; Lt. Col. Eric Schacht, commander of the division's 1st Battalion 26th Infantry Regiment, and Iraqi security forces officials toured Samarra with local leaders to assess the status of police stations in the city.

Iraqi and coalition forces are planning to continue to work with the new leadership to set the conditions for reconstruction and quality of life projects, beginning by setting up joint traffic control points within the city and opening the Samarra Bridge to reduced civilian traffic.

